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SCRIPTURE-WORD AGAINST INCLOSURE;

viz:

Such as doe Un-People Townes, and Un-Corne Fields.

As also,

Against all such, that daub over this black Sinne with untempered morter.

By JOHN MOORE, Minister of the Church at *Knaptoft* in *Leicester-shire*.

Isaiah 5. 20.

Woe unto them that call evill good, and good, evill: that put darknesse for light, and light for darknesse; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

LONDON,
Printed for *Anthony Williamson*, at the Queens Armes in S. *Pauls* Church-yard, 1656.

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To his Highneſſe the Lord PROTECTOUR *of* England, Scotland, *and* Ireland, *and his moſt Honourable Councell.*

May it pleaſe your Highneſſe,

IN this diſcourſe I plead the *cauſe* of the *Publique and Poore* of your *true-hearted* County of *Leiceſter*, and the Counties adjacent. Elſe (had it been any thing of private intereſt) my hand and heart would have trembled to have put any thing into your hands, to turn off your eye but a few minutes, from the wonderfull weighty affaires of theſe three Nations; which are all Incumbents upon your Highneſſe and Councell. The onely wiſe, great, good God ſupport you with his owne wiſdome, counſell, and ſtrength. Though the main of my buſineſſe is for ſoules, even to get out of

them ſelfe, world, ſinne and Devil, and to get in God, Chriſt, grace and the Goſpel: Yet I have borrowed ſome weeks (which by double pains, I bleſſe God I have repayed) to wait upon Parliaments formerly, and now upon your Highneſſe and Councel with Petitions, to prevent the ruine of my Countrey (which is dear unto me) ſo endeavoured & indangered by ſelf-iſh men truly delineated in theſe Papers: whatſoever ſpecious pretences may be made to the contrary of *Regulated Incloſure, and of a may-be Incloſure*, without ruine either of *Publick or Poor*. In theſe *Inland Countyes* wofull experience tells us, It is not ſo. And that *Incloſure* is now making, is likely to be in time as deſolating as any, if not ſpeedily prevented by your Highneſſe and Councell. Such *Incloſurists* in the very making of them, having

Chari parẽtes, chari liberi, chari quoq; amici, ſed omnes omnium charitates comprehendit patria. Tullius *de officiis.*

ving no reſpect to the Publique, or right in Law, or the Conſciences of men. As in the ſeverall Petitions from *Leiceſter-ſhire* now before you it appears: which Petitions your Highneſſe (our hearts rejoyce in you, and bleſſe God for you) without delay heard, and referred to your Councell: which alſo they have read and committed to the Lord Viſcount *Liſle*, Sir *Gilbert Pickering*, Mr. *Strickland*, and *Charles Wolſley* or any two of them, who are ſpeedily to ſpeake with the parties that attend the buſineſſe, and to conſider of the matter therein contained, and to offer to the Councell what they ſhall conceive fit to be done thereupon. And as your *Leiceſter-ſhire* Petitioners have petitioned *your Highneſſe, and Councell-men upon earth*; ſo they daily Petition the *High God of heaven* to incline your hearts to

relieve the oppreſſed of theſe Inland Counties. And truly God hath ſet it upon my Spirit, That you are (*Heſter* 4.14.) *Come to the rule of this nation for ſuch a time as this.* And my ſoul wreſtles with my God that you may ſtill be ſerviceable to God, and his Church, the Publique and the Poore, till you goe away hence and ſhall be ſeen no more, and then be gathered to our Chriſt, who then ſhall ſay, *Mat.* 25. 35,36. &c. *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, receive a kingdome prepared for you from the beginning of the world. I was hungry and you gave me meat, thirſty and you gave me drinke, naked and you cloathed me, &c.* Amen ſaith the ſoul of him who is

As your Highneſſe moſt humble ſervant,
ſo alſo the Churches,
the Publiques,
and the Poors,

John Moore.

An Advertiſement of *three* things, to ſuch Reader, *who as he loves God, loves his Neighbour alſo.*

FIrſt, *if thou chance to meet with a Book, called* [A Vindication of Regulated Incloſure:] *thou haſt very* little *reaſon to believe* much *in it. The man ſpeaks of what may be, and not of what uſually is. He hath fancyes, notions and dreams of Innocent Incloſure both from Depopulation and Decay of Tillage. And for the Townes he names to be free, they are groſly guilty either of the one, or of the other, or of both.*

Secondly, *whereas that Book tells thee, That ſuch deſolations are* Vitia Perſonarum non rei, *It is the fault of the Perſons and not of the Thing. I muſt confeſſe with him they are* vicious perſons *indeed that produce ſuch Incloſure. What better* iſſue *can we look for from ſuch* Parents? *Incloſure, making of hedges and ditches, is not a ſinne, but ſuch incloſure that is deſtructive to Publique, and Poore is a crying ſinne. Laſtly, I complaine not of incloſure* in Kent or Eſſex, *where they have other callings and trades to maintaine their Country by, or of places neer the ſea or City, but of incloſure in the Inland Countreys, which takes away Tillage, the onely Trade generall they have to live on; and whereby they are ſo beneficiall to the reſt of the Nation, in times of ſcarcity. Pray with me,* God ſpeed the Plough.

Thy Friend, if thou be ſo to
the Publique and the Poore,

John Moore.

A Scripture-word againſt Incloſure, &c.

Amos, ch. 2. ver. 6, 7.

Thus ſaith the LORD, *for three tranſgreſſions of* Iſrael, *and for foure, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof, becauſe they ſold the righteous for ſilver, and the poor for a payre of ſhooes.*

That pant after the duſt of the earth on the head of the poor, and turn aſide the way of the meek.

THE Lord aſſiſt me his poor *under-ſhepherd* with his own holy Spirit, that I may deale as faithfully and plainly with *England*, as *Amos* an honeſt-hearted *heardſman*, and GOD's Prophet dealt with *Iſrael*.

For *England* (eſpecially *Leiceſter-ſhire*, and the Counties round about) ſtands *now* as guilty in the ſight of God of the ſinnes in the Text, as *Iſrael* did *then*: And therefore the Lord may juſtly ſay to us,

For three tranſgreſſions, and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof, becauſe &c.

Viz. by ſuch incloſure that doth un-people Towns, and uncorn Fields. For it will parallel the ſinne in the Text.

The Text contains *Iſraels ſinne, and Iſraels puniſhment*. I ſhall firſt open the ſinnes of *Iſrael*, and then tell me if *England* be not as guilty as *Iſrael*; and if ſo, why ſhould not ſhe partake

take of the ſame puniſhment? I entreat therefore, as I open the ſinnes of *Iſrael*, *bear in your minde the Inclofure in the middle of* England.

Firſt then, what is meant by *three tranſgreſſions, and for four?* In plain tearms is meant, adding of ſinne to ſinne, *Iſa.* 30. 1. and tranſgreſſion to tranſgreſſion.

Tremellius upon this Propheſie, *id eſt, propter quàm plurimas numero finitus pro indefinito, &c.*

And ſo *Tremellius* expounds three and four tranſgreſſions, that is ſaith he, for very many. A finite number is put for an indefinite. And then God ſeemed to ſpeak thus, If *Iſrael* had had a moderation in ſinning, I would have turned away their puniſhment, I would have been moderate in puniſhing; but ſince to three ſinnes they have added four, and to many they daily adde more, I am determined to perfect my judgements upon them, and to be avenged on them once for all.

If we take three and four for ſeven: Know we *ſeven* is eminently in Scripture put for a *multitude*. So 1 *Sam.* 2. 5. (ſaith *Hannah*) *The barren hath born ſeven*, that is, *many*, and is become a mother of many children. *Seven devils were caſt out of the woman, Luke* 8. 2. that is, a multitude. *The juſt falleth ſeven times a day, Prov.* 24 16. that is, often: ſo the ſenſe is, They multiply their ſinnes, and I will multiply my judgments.

Laſtly, we may expound for *three tranſgreſſions, and for four*; by the *twelfth verſe of this Chapter*. Whereas here he complains of *three tranſgreſſions, and foure*; ſo there he complains, *I am preſſed under you as a cart is preſſed with ſheaves*: Now this is a plain Countrey-compariſon: When we load a cart, we begin with a few ſheaves at the firſt, with two, or three, or four; and ſo goe on to lay on more ſheaves one after another, till we over-load, and are ready to preſſe the cart into pieces. So *Iſrael* layd on one ſheaf after another, one ſinne after another, ſtill burthening God with their ſinnes, that he ſeems to groan under the burthen of them, as one that is weary to bear them any longer. *Iſaiah* 1. 24. *they make him ſigh. Ah, I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* I can hold my hands no longer for their multiplied tranſgreſſions.

They ſold the righteous for ſilver, and the poor for a payre of ſhooes.

If we put that of our Prophet (*Amos* 8. 6.) to theſe words

of

of selling the Righteous that they may buy the Poore for silver, &c. They buy and sell the righteous Poor for silver, that is, for the gain and profit, use them they doe as they use their beasts, keep them or put them off for their advantage. So long as serviceable, drudge them, rack their rents, buy them to get by them, and then sell them; yea, away with them out of house and harbour, town and field, take away their calling, and livelyhood that should maintain themselves, wives, and children, &c. When lesser gain comes in by them; They sell them or buy them upon that account as may serve their turns (*Judas-like*) to fill the bagge, and make no more account of them than a payre of shooes, yea old shooes that they cast to the dunghill.

That pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poore.

That pant after the dust of the earth, That is, (saith Mr. *Caryll*) exceedingly desire and long for it. As *David* describes his holy desires, *Psal.* 42. 1. *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee O God*: that is, I extremely desire thy presence and communion with thee: even as the Hart being hunted and heated desireth the waters. Thus they panted after the dust of the earth, that is, after those things which are but as the dust of the earth, or whose originall and matter is but the dust of the earth, gold, or silver. These are but the refined dust of the earth. But whose dust did they pant after? It was the dust upon the *head of the poor*. If they did but see a poor man to have gotten a little about him, though onely enough to keep life and soule together, to preserve himself and his family from starving, or begging, they presently panted after it: they were passionately desirous of it: they cast about how to get it. They who are inflamed with covetousnesse are busie *to finde out*, and having found out, are greedy *to pursue* all advantages and occasions to enrich themselves though it be with the ruine of the poor. They are glad to get something even from them, who (according to common speech) have nothing. They scrap't from them who have but scraps to live on. Thus sweetly hath that heavenly man interpreted these words to our hand.

Vid. The clear-spirited Expositor upon holy Writ Mr. *Caryll* upon *Job*, c. 24. ver. 3.

And turn aside the way of the meek.

That is, *first* they turn aside the way of *Justice and E-*

quity, which is the means of recovering their right. They cannot have that juſtice and right *done* them, which is *due* unto them. By reaſon of the greatneſſe of the eſtates and power of theſe men, they ſtop the current of juſtice and equity, whereby theſe meek ones ſhould be delivered from their oppreſſours.

Secondly, they turn aſide the way of the meek, that is, they take away the way of their *livelyhood*. We uſe commonly to aske this Queſtion, How doth ſuch a man live? And 'tis anſwered, He lives in a very good way, he hath ſuch a way of living, ſuch a trade, calling, or profeſſion, that's his way. Thus to turn aſide the way of the meek, is to put them beſides the way of getting their bread, and maintaining themſelves, wives, and children with neceſſary proviſions.

To take away the calling they live by, is a turning aſide the way of the meek to all purpoſes.

Thirdly, they turn aſide the way of the meek. Why? what is the way of the meek? The Pſalmiſt tells us, *Pſal.* 25. 9. it is Gods way, the meek he will teach his way. Now theſe great ones either *firſt* force them to make ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience, or *elſe* undoe them if they will not conſent unto them in their unjuſt and uncharitable deſignes. And ſo of neceſſity theſe meek ones muſt be *undone* either *in the inward, or outward man.* Or elſe *ſecondly*, they become tempters unto theſe meek ones by their often alluring perſwaſions and ill egging, or elſe by their ill examples to turn them out of Gods way.

Thus having explained the Text, I come to ſhew, That *England* (eſpecially *Leiceſter-ſhire*, and the Counties adjacent) is as guilty of the ſinnes in the Text *now*, as *Iſrael was then*: yea, eſpecially in that *aggregated* ſinne of *Incloſure*, viz: *ſuch as doth un-people Towns, and un-corn Fields*, which I chiefly intend in this preſent *diſcourſe*. And that principally, becauſe there are ſo many ready to make Helmets to ſave this great *Goliah* ſinne, *harmleſſe*; making this great ſinne a little ſinne, and ſo at laſt no ſinne at all. For indeed, *all the workmen of this occupation riſe up together, crying, Great is the Diana of Incloſure, becauſe by this craft we have our wealth, Acts* 19. 25. And therefore to defend it they *prate* much, and *print* ſomething: yet I never heard

heard of any ſo *audaciouſly impious* as to *preach* the lawfulneſſe of ſuch Incloſure. But I ſhall ſhew that this Incloſure is not a ſingle ſinne, but will admit for the aggravation of it all thoſe ſinnes, and *black circumſtances* in the Text: And then we may conclude, it is a tranſgreſſion for which the Lord will not turn away the puniſhment thereof. Now then it is my buſineſſe to *rip* up ſuch Incloſure, and to manifeſt how many ſins lye within the *bowells of this monſter*, &c. And for the proof I ſhall bring herein, it is undeniable. Such incloſure ſhall be diſcovered by his *bloody hands*, and in the very *Fact be found guilty*. If the *Lord PROTECTOR his Highneſſe, and moſt Honourable Counſel ſhould impannel a Jury of all the honeſt hearts in* Leiceſter-ſhire, *and* North-hampton-ſhire, *and Counties adjacent, they muſt bring therein a Verdict againſt ſuch Incloſure, guilty of Depopulation and decay of Tillage* generally, very few if any at all excepted. Our proof is *De Facto*: *it is ſo*. Behold it with your eyes. Oh wofull *experience*! And that Incloſure is *now* about in *Leiceſter-ſhire* is like to be as ſordid and baſe as any of the former, if not worſe: for, Depopulation comes by degrees; in the next generation, if not preſent. Behold what deſolation of houſes and tillage of Farmers, Cottagers, Men-ſervants, Mayd-ſervants, &c. which all lived by the Plow.

But I haſten for the Conviction of ſuch Incloſure to be guilty as aforeſaid. And for ſuch conviction I ſhall follow the method of the Text, as thoſe ſinnes lye in order there:

For three Tranſgreſſions of Iſrael *and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof.*

Firſt, It cannot be denyed that if ſuch as make ſuch Incloſure be guilty of all the ſinnes in the Text, then they are guilty of three tranſgreſſions and of foure, (that is, as hath been opened) they adde ſinne to ſinne, they accumulate very many ſinnes, they commit a multitude of ſinnes: To three ſinnes they adde foure, they preſſe God as a cart is preſſed with ſheaves, *Amos* 2 12. laying on one ſheafe after another, but thehing God with their ſinnes, and make him ſerve with their ſinnes. But the former is true, Therefore they are guilty of three tranſgreſſions and of four. We ſhall prove the former true in the enſuing particulars of the Text,

They ſold the righteous for ſilver.

That is, if we put to this *ſelling* of the righteous for ſilver, the *buying* of the poore for ſilver, *Amos* 8.6. they make chaffer and merchandize of them for gain and profit: they uſe them as they doe their beaſts, *keep* them or *put* them off for advantage: they buy them, and ſell them, as may beſt ſerve their turns to get by them. But what is that they thus buy and ſell the righteous for? *For ſilver*, that is, for advantage, profit, gain. *Oh baſe!* And then why ſuch Incloſure made I pray you? Is it not for ſilver, advantage, gain? Doth not ſilver, filthy lucre lye at the bottome? Doe they not call ſuch Incloſure an *Improvement* of their lands? We ſhall *gaine by it*, we ſhall *treble* our rents. Hence thoſe *Heatheniſh* ſpeeches of theirs, *May I not make the beſt of mine own? May I not doe what I liſt with mine own? Who ſhall hinder us?* And they ſay of their eſtates, as he in *Pſal.*12. 4. of his tongue, *Our eſtates are ours, Who is Lord over us?* I anſwer, whereas thou talkeſt of thine own: that although thou art a *civill Owner*, yet thou art a *ſpirituall Uſurper*. Thou muſt look whether thou haſt right in the *Court of Conſcience*, as well as in the *Court of Law*. Whether thou haſt right in the *Conſiſtory of God*, as well as in the *Common pleas of men*. What, mayeſt thou doe with thine own what thou liſteſt? No: thou muſt doe what God would have thee to doe with it. He is thy *Soveraigne Lord* of whom thou holdeſt all *in chief*. Thou art but his *Steward*, and he hath committed to thee all theſe Talents of thy Eſtate, and one day thou muſt give an account of thy *ſtewardſhip*, viz: whether thou haſt improved theſe talents, (not to thy own) but to thy heavenly Maſters advantage, even to the glory of his name, the good of all with whom thou liveſt, eſpecially of the ſaints, and to thy own poor ſoules advantage. What, mayeſt thou doe with thy own what thou liſteſt? No: He that is Lord over thee, and hath made thee rich, 1 *Tim.*6. 17. *and hath given thee all things richly to enjoy*, hath layd a *charge* upon thee (in the 17, 18, & 19 verſes) what thou ſhouldeſt doe with all he hath given thee, even *To doe good, to be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up unto thy ſelfe a ſure foundation againſt the time to come, that thou mayeſt lay hold on eternall life*. Oh! what a ſandy-foundation doe theſe

build

build on for eternall life, who walk contrary to this charge? &c. What, mayeſt thou doe with thine own what thou liſteſt, and improve it to thine own advantage? No: hear that complaint, *Phil.* 2. 21. *All ſeek their own, not the things that are Jeſus Chriſts.* I tell thee Jeſus Chriſt muſt ſhare with thee in land, houſe, food, clothing, (*Mat* 25. 41. to the end of the Chap:) that is, in his members: or elſe, *Depart from me ye curſed* muſt be your eternall doome. But may I not improve mine owne eſtate to my beſt advantage? No: thou muſt have a care of thy brothers alſo, *Phil.* 2. 4. *Look not every man on his own things, but every man alſo on the things of others*, even that they may thrive as thy ſelf. But yet I have not touched this ſin in this particular to the *quick*. Thou muſt then ask this Queſtion, may I not *improve mine own to the hurt and damage of others?* But here I know thou wilt *ſtartle*, and ſay, *Whoſe hurt? Whoſe damage?* I will make it appear, thou *raiſeſt* thy own eſtate upon the *ruine both of Publick & Poor.* Firſt, on the ruine of the *Publicke*, *Thou takeſt away Tillage, which is the generall Trade we live on in* Leiceſter-ſhire, *and the Counties adjacent*: By which *Trade or Tillage* and *Huſbandry* we have been as *beneficiall* to the reſt of the *Commonwealth of England* as any Countyes whatſoever. We have fed them not onely with our wheat, corn, and mault, not onely in plentifull years, but alſo in times of famine and dearth, we being the onely magazine for corn in the middle of the Nation; But alſo we have fed them with fat mutton, and ſwines fleſh, yea alſo with victualling our ſhips by our peaſe and beans that come by the plow. As our open fields breed abundance of ſheep, ſo the plow provides abundance of the aforeſaid proviſions to feed them fat; yea, at ſuch times when no fat fleſh is to be had elſewhere in the Nation. *If the Tillage of theſe inland Countyes be turned into grazing, the reſt of the Nation muſt be in a ſtarving condition whenſoever the Lord ſhall ſtack his hand of this abundance of corn*, he ſeems of late years to have rained from heaven amongſt us. Thus are we as *beneficiall* by our *Trade of Tillage to other Countyes*, as they to us by other *Manufactures* which are ſo commodious, they lying neer to the Sea and City which we are ſo farre from.

Yea, to ſhew the Intolerableneſſe of ſuch Incloſure: Behold

it takes away the *general Trade* that all the Inhabitants of theſe Counties live on, except ſome great ones and Tradeſmen in Market-Towns, &c. Can any deny but that the Farmer lives of the *plow*, the Cottagers live of the *plow*, and the Children of both brought up to the trade of the *plow*, and doe not the Children of the poor become Men-ſervants and Mayd-ſervants to the *Plow-man*? Doth not that *antient, honeſt, venerable, and profitable Trade of Husbandry maintain all theſe*? Yea, and all theſe lived as happily, plentifully, and richly of this *Trade of Tillage in theſe Countyes* before ſo much *Incloſure*, as any in other Countyes whatſoever, or of what other Trade ſoever they were of. What muſt become of theſe *thouſands and ten thouſands* if ſuch Incloſure be not ſpeedily ſtopped? As every honeſt heart prayes GOD SPEED THE PLOW, ſo every every *good Miniſter* will have a word to uphold it, and every *good Magiſtrate* make uſe of his power to ſave it from ruine. What now, mayeſt thou doe what thou liſteſt with thine owne, and advance thine own neſt on high thus upon the ruine of the Publique? Why art thou not content with thine own? ſince eſpecially thy lands in Common are worth as much and more than ever thy fore-fathers purchaſed them at, or thou of late haſt purchaſed thine at. If they that ſold thy lands in Common had had thy evil conſcience to have improved them upon the ruines of the Publique and Poor, thou and thy Fore-fathers muſt have paid twice as much, if not thrice as much more for them. But now theſe covetous wretches have got the *triak* of it to buy lands in Common, and preſently improve them, and ſo double if not treble their money upon a *Publick account*. Theſe cruell ones care not how many they ruine ſo they may be rich, nor how many they make Beggars ſo they may be Gentlemen; Let them anſwer me this one Queſtion, viz: How ſo *many thouſand Families* can ſubſiſt, when their *Livelyhood* is taken away, to wit, their *Trade of Tillage*? and how ſhall ſo many *thouſands* of Children be diſpoſed of from ſtarving, Vagrancy or thieving, ſince ſo much Incloſure hath cauſed ſo many Tradeſmen already they cannot live one by another?

But it will be objected, ſome Books have been printed of late that prove Incloſure both lawfull and laudable. Surely my heart

heart bleeds within me to ſee ſome hands at ſuch Books of whom I hoped better things, That they ſhould daub ore this black ſinne with ſuch untempered morter. Oh how men will ſcrabble for gain! They would not have *a ſpade called a ſpade.* They would not (though they are ſuch) be called oppreſſours, unjuſt, unconſcionable, uncharitable, unmercifull. And ſurely ſuch Books are ſtuffed ſo full of *levity and untruths*, that the Authors of them deſerve rather to be *pitied* than *anſwered.* I but theſe Books ſay there may be an innocent Incloſure. What then? *The Petitioners to Parliament formerly, and the Petitioners now to his Highneſſe and Councell ſeek a redreſſe againſt ſuch Incloſure that doth depopulate Townes and decay Tillage.* And ſuch the authors of theſe books hold to be hateſull to God and man. Yes, but they ſay there may be an incloſure without decay of Tillage or Depopulation. Surely they may make men as ſoon believe there is no ſun in the firmament as that uſually depopulation & decay of Tillage will not follow incloſure in our Inland Countyes. We ſee it with our eyes: It is ſo. *De facto*, it is ſo. And we ſee the incloſure that they are ſo now about will be as ſordid or more then any formerly. They having not ſo much as one Covenant amongſt them to *uphold Tillage.* And then we know what followes in his time, even an utter depopulation. It matters not what they pretend in their books, proviſion for the poore, &c. In one place they ſpeake of *fourteene acres* given to the poore, what will this doe when they have taken away their whole trade of maintenance for themſelves and familyes? Yet but they ſay they doe not intend depopulation and decay of Tillage. If in charity I could believe them, Yet I muſt anſwer, it is *finis operis*, though not *operantis*: It is the end of the *worke*, though not of the *work-man*, as every where appeares. It is true indeed, *Infant incloſure* may be ſomewhat in his *nonage free from depopulation, but never from decay of Tillage.* Yet I know not where *gray-headed incloſure* is free from depopulation as well as decay of Tillage. If any where it is rare indeed. For they would never incloſe to keep Farmers, Tenants, Cottagers, Servants, teames &c. Yea, but the books tell of ſome townes free from both Depopulation and decay of Tillage. They ſcrabble up a few townes that are innocent (as they ſay) which are juſt none

at all in comparison of those many hundreds are guilty of both. And these few they are forced to fish out of the County of *Leicester*, *Warwicke*, *Northampton*, &c. Let's see what truth is in this. For I know two or three of these places, because they are neer unto me. They bragge of the innocency of *Ashby magna*, which hath been inclosed above fifty yeares. The truth of this businesse stands thus, The Lord of that place gave most of his Tenants Leases for three Lives, and one and twenty years after, which are not yet expired. And therefore the time of depopulation of that Towne is not yet come. But they name *Misterton* and *Ponlney* as innocent also. I wonder they dare doe so, since in regard of depopulation there is no house at all left in either of them but the Ministers. And the Closes now are called by the Towns name that were antiently there. And as for decay of Tillage in those places they have not been plowed in the memory of man, except some part of them of late: And the Tenants that rent them must plow them now but for Four years onely. How dare they print such Falshoods? And as little credit I heare and believe is to be given to the innocency of the rest of the Townes named.

I have one word to speak to men that have not put off *humanity*, naturall compassion towards their own flesh, and to Christians that love much, because God hath forgiven them much. Which is this. If you did but hear what complaining and lamentation is made of Farmers that rented land turned out of those Inclosed places, and of poor Cottagers together with them, that the one cannot get no not at any excessive rate a little land to plow, whereby he might keep his teame and cattell, that himself and family might be employed in husbandry, to get a poor living by, but is constrained to sell all these to all their utter undoings: That the other cannot get a house any where to harbour himselfe and his poore babes.

Surely, it would make *all Ministers and others*, *yea Ministers above others*, to ride and run, spend their pains and estate to petition, entreat, begge, wait; and never cease to be importunate for reliefe for these oppressed *Fellow-creatures*, and many of them *Fellow citizens* of heaven together with us.

Behold now the oppressions of Townes in open fields and Market.

Market-towns! for when theſe Incloſures have made Farmers, Cottagers; and Cottagers, Beggars; no way of *livelihood* being left them: Theſe poor with their families are forced into *Market-townes*, and *open-fielded Townes*, hoping they may finde ſome employment there to preſerve them and theirs from periſhing. Whereupon, theſe open-fielded places are ſo loaden with poor, that the Inhabitants are not able to relieve them. But theſe Book-men for Incloſure ſay they pay more Taxes. And truly well they may, when they lay ſuch burthens upon open fields that they are not able to bear them; not onely all thoſe poore the Incloſure have beggered, but all carriages the State hath need of, free quarter, attendance at the aſſizes and ſeſſions, &c. The Incloſures get the gaine, and have the eaſe; and poor open fields pay the ſhot, and endure all the drudgery. What enemies to the Publique are theſe Incloſures? obſerve how *few or no ſervice able men or horſes* in theſe places, for the *defence* of the *Nation* when need is: whereas before they were incloſed there were twenty, thirty, fourty, &c. of both kindes, now ſcarce one or two. Yes, but one of the laſt Book-men for Incloſure tells us they are *jaded tyred* horſes. *Oh impudence! let the whole Countrey ſpeake, whether four or five of theſe open fielded Townes (yea ſometimes one of them alone) are not able to raiſe a whole Troop of gallant Horſes, and to ſet valiant men on their backs too, in ſo formidable a manner, that they were able to make the ſtouteſt Troop to quake that oppoſed the Parliament formerly, and his Highneſſe the Lord Protectour of late*: yea, *which they have done too, under both Governments.* Whereas ſuch Incloſed places can (I believe) ſcarcely raiſe *one Troop* either for men or horſes, &c. Oh! let not theſe valiant ſpirited men for the Publique in *Leiceſter-ſhire*, and their forces be trampled in the dirt by ſuch Incloſure, to raiſe a few private perſons upon the *ruine of the ſtrength of the Nation.* Surely if a *Jericho* was again to be beſieged, there would be found good ſtore of *Rams hornes*, though but *few perſons to winde them* in theſe Incloſed places. But theſe Book-men for Incloſure ſay, that the common fields cauſe many *Law ſuits* &c. I ſhall (God willing) anſwer all as I paſſe through this Text of Scripture. *Firſt*, there are offenders both within hedges and without too, and loving hearts will paſſe by an offence.

Secondly, in common fields they live like loving neighbours together for the moſt part, till the *ſpirit of Incloſure enter* into ſome rich Churles heart, who doe not onely pry out but feign occaſions too to goe to *law* with their neighbours, and no reconcilement to be made till they conſent to Incloſure. For this is the trick they fall together by the eares with their honeſt neighbours, that they bring their deſigne about. Yea, but there is ſo much *ſtealing and filching* by the Poore. But thank Incloſure for that, which hath filled openfield Towns ſo full of Poore they cannot live one by another, For, Poverty is a provoking argument to ſteale. And therefore *Agur* prayes, *Prov.* 30. 8. *Give me not poverty*, and why ſo? the ninth Verſe tells us, *leſt I be poore and ſteale*. And thus Incloſure makes thieves, and then they cry out of thieves.

Becauſe they ſold the Righteous for ſilver, and the poore for a payre of ſhoes.

The Righteous: who are thoſe? Not to ſtand upon the divers acceptations of the word [*Righteous*,] Ile ſhew what is meant by a righteous man, *viz: The Evangelicall righteous man is one*, who, as he hath the Righteouſneſſe of Jeſus Chriſt *imputed* unto him, ſo he hath in ſome meaſure the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt *imparted* unto him, deſiring and endeavouring *to keep the Commandements of God, and the faith of Jeſus*, Rev. 14. 12. *He is one that loves God above all, and his neighbour as himſelf*, Mat. 22. 37, 38, 39. *He is one*, 1 Joh. 4 21. *who as he loveth* God, *loveth his neighbour alſo*. Oh! how pretious are theſe Righteous ones in heaven? *They are the Lords people, his portion, the lot of his Inheritance*, Deut. 32. 9. They are the Lords *owne*, his very *jewells*: All the reſt of a Town are but the *rubbiſh* amongſt whom theſe his *jewells lye and live for a while*. And to ſpeak the truth (for truth muſt be ſpoken however it be taken) if the Lord had not had *two* of *theſe Righteous ones*, *or three of theſe Iewels*, that as they love God they love their neighbour alſo, in many Townes of theſe Inland Counties, what deſolations had there been made ere this time by ſuch Incloſure?

Theſe incloſuriſts ſell the *Righteous for ſilver*. What care they for Gods jewells, his portion, *his inheritance*, ſo they may improve their *own inheritance*? what cared *Judas for Jeſus Chriſt*

the

the Righteous, ſo he might get *thirty pieces of ſilver* by him? What care theſe men for the *tender conſciences* of any of theſe Righteous ones, that dare not conſent to ſuch incloſure? They will make them make ſhipwrack of faith and a good conſcience, or elſe eſtates and liberties and all muſt be ruined by multiplicities of triviall Law ſuites in common Law and Chancery, threatning they will not leave them a ſhift to their backs, nor a cow to their payle. I could here give you a large Catalogue of the unjuſt vexations of ſuch Righteous ones, but becauſe ſome of their vexers pretend to religion, I will ſpare them, *One of theſe two evills are incident to ſuch as dare not in conſcience conſent to ſuch incloſure*, viz. *Either to be undone in the inward, or elſe in the outward man, chooſe them which. If they goe againſt conſcience in the inward man; if they will keep a good conſcience in the outward man*, and here let the *incloſuriſts* of *Cat thorpe* in *Leiceſter-ſhire* tremble, to have no reſpect to the conſcience of one of theſe righteous men (their owne conſciences I believe judging him ſuch a one) nor to his vow to his God made upon good ground in the ſight both of God and good men, nor to his right in law, according to a petition that is now depending before his *Highneſſe and his moſt Honourable Councell*, in which there is made *a good progreſs* and good hopes (*praiſed be God*) of a *happy iſſue*. It matters not what one of the Book-men for incloſure truely prattles to the contrary. He makes but a Jeer of a good conſcience in his Book. And as for his right in Law, becauſe it is but a little to their great deale, they may alter the propriety of it as they liſt, without his conſent, and ſet hedges and ditches upon his common whether he will or no. I wonder who made theſe men *dividers* of his common from theirs, when he hath a right and propriety in every foot of common in all their fields. Is there not the ſame right *in Law* to a *little* as a *great deale*? &c.

And the poore for a paire of ſhooes.

The Poore. Well may they ſell the *Poore* for a paire of ſhooes, when they ſell the *Righteous* for ſilver. When *Judas* ſold his Maſter *That Righteous one* for ſilver (let Miniſters remember *Judas* was a Diſciple) no wonder if he *cared not for the Poore*. But theſe incloſuriſts have the poore much in their mouthes, and how they provide for the poore. My exhortation to them is

1 *Joh.* 3. 18. *My little children let us not love in word neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* Saint *James* ſhewes us that *a few words will not warm, nor feede, nor cloath poore people,* James 2. 16. *If one of you ſay unto them, depart in peace, be you warmed, and filled, notwithſtanding you give them not thoſe things which are needfull to the body, what doth it profit?* Alas, what will all their good words profit the poore, when they doe not only not give them thoſe things which are needfull for the body, but take away at once all things that are needfull for the body, even the *Trade of Tillage* which ſhould warme, cloath, feede them and their families. But theſe book-men for incloſure have *articles*, yea, and *acres* for the Poore too. What would theſe men be thought charitable men? Let *Iudas* be thought ſo too. For he would have the *oyntment ſold for three hundred pence, and given to the Poore, John* 12. 5. Truth is, former Incloſuriſts have been very ſpecious and pretending for the poore in their *Promiſes, Articles, Acres,* when they were hot upon their buſineſſe of incloſure, to *ſtop the mouthes* of Poore and Country from clamours; and theſe incloſures of the *laſt Edition* which they are now about are but ſordid in reſpect of the former in that kinde. But wofull experience tells us, a ſhort time forced all the Tenants and Cottagers out of moſt of thoſe places into the open fielded Towns to ſeek for a livelyhood where they can finde it, to the great oppreſſions of thoſe Townes.

That pant after the duſt of the earth upon the head of the Poore.

Pant, that is, exceedingly deſire it, and long for it. *After the duſt of the earth*, that is, after thoſe things which are but as the duſt of the earth, and whoſe originall and matter is but the duſt of the earth. Oh the exceſſive deſire (after ſuch Incloſure and the gain that comes by it) exeeeding the bounds of piety, equity, charity, and humanity it ſelf, as you have heard! *Improvement* of eſtate is this mans *bayte*. And if any thing goe about to hinder that, he is like a Lyon ſtirred up at the ſight of his prey, and makes no conſcience of devouring *men, women, and children* that ſtand in his way.

The *ſerpent* feeds upon the *duſt of the earth*: It feeds upon *baſe* and *low things, vile and venomous*: ſo doe covetous, mercileſſe

cileſſe men. As the Serpent licks the *duſt of the earth*; ſo doe they lick the *duſt of the earth*, they feed upon blood, upon oppreſſion; *They pant after the duſt of the earth*, they pant after the eſtate and means that poor men have in Town or Field, and feed upon it, to ſatisfie (if it were poſſible) their greedy appetites in ſucking the eſtates and cruſhing the bones of the poore. The Prophet *Habakkuk* hath a woe for theſe, *Hab.* 2. v.6. *Woe to him that encreaſeth that which is not his* (to wit, in the Court of Conſcience aſwell as in the Court of the Law) *and ladeth himſelf with thick clay. Lutum ſcite pictum*, with gold and ſilver, the fineſt duſt and pieces of the earth, whereby all the reſt of the commodities of the earth are valued. This duſt of the earth, this thick clay doth but load and burthen their ſoules and conſciences, and makes them drive heavily heavenward, Gods glory ward, and their own ſalvation ward. This thick clay doth them no more good than that gold and ſilver and embroydered cloath of arras a *ſumpter horſe* is burthen'd with all day, and at night is turned with the reſt of the Jades with a gauled and bruiſed back into the ſtable. Oh take heed of a gauled conſcience loaded and bruiſed with ſuch *hedges and ditches* as hedge out Publique and Poor; leſt at the night of Death thou be turned with the reſt of the Jades of worldlings, *Dives*-like, into the Devils ſtable.

Upon the head of the Poore.

They pant after the duſt of the earth, but upon whoſe head? *upon the head of the Poore.* Theſe beaſts will be ſure to goe over where the hedge is loweſt. In any towne where there is any rich men Publique ſpirited, and have bowels toward the Poore, there theſe greedy gripes dare not meddle with their matches, and cannot force them to ſuch incloſure, becauſe they are able to defend themſelves. But on the contrary in any towne where there are mercifull men, Publique ſpirited men &c. That dare not in conſcience conſent to ſuch incloſure, If theſe be men but of meane eſtates, theſe mercileſſe wretches joyne purſes, and make no more conſcience to trample upon theſe righteous poor, yea, upon their conſciences, eſtates, liberties, and whole families, then they doe to trample upon the mire in the ſtreets.

And turne aſide the way of the meek.

Theſe incloſuriſts turne aſide the way of the meek theſe three wayes. *Firſt*, they turne aſide the way of Juſtice and Equity which is the meanes of keeping and recovering their right. A great purſe will make a good cauſe though it be ſtarke naught. What ſay theſe Mammoniſts when any croſſe them in ſuch incloſure, their word is, *I'le undoe him if he will not yeild.* And how is that? By ſuites in Law and Chancery. And have not theſe men been as good as their words? I could here tell ſad ſtories. But I intend to name no man in this preſent diſcourſe.

Secondly, *they turne aſide the way of the meeke* when they take away the way of their livelyhood. Now *Tillage* is the way, the calling, the profeſſion which moſt of the inhabitants of *Inland* Counties live of, as we have proved.

Thirdly, *they turne aſide the way of the meeke:* Why? What is the way of the meek? The *Pſalmiſt* tells us (*Pſal.* 25.9.) it is Gods way. *The meeke he will teach his way.* They endeavour to turne them out of the way of faith and a good conſcience, in perſwading them if that will not doe, and compelling them to doe againſt conſcience, or undoe. But I conclude with the wiſe mans exhortation, *Prov* 22.22,23. *Rob not the poor becauſe he is poore, neither oppreſſe the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will plead their cauſe, and ſpoyle the ſoule of thoſe that ſpoyled them.*

FINIS.